

# Press-Herald

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## A Ceiling on Taxes

The spiraling costs of owning property threaten to limit drastically the ability of the average family to own its own home.

If the present trend is continued, the Southland homeowner will be faced with a \$22 property tax by 1980, County Assessor Philip E. Watson said last week when he made an appearance in Sacramento in an effort to put a lid on taxes.

Testifying before the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee, Watson urged approval of his bill to limit property taxes to 2 per cent of the market value. This would mean that a \$20,000 home could be taxed only \$400 per year.

Such a limit would not reduce taxes now being paid by most homeowner, but it would have the effect of putting a lid on the rate. It thus could be done at this time with little disruptive effect, Watson reports.

California's taxpayers are on the point of rebellion. Unfortunately, the first to suffer because of the reaction against high taxes are the schools who are forced to rely heavily on property taxes for operating and construction revenue. Any taxpayer resentment at the growing tax rate is certain to be reflected in the balloting on school bond proposals which provide money for classroom construction.

The Press-Herald believes the proposed limitation has merit and deserves more than lip service from the Legislators. Without some limitation on the spiraling taxes, the ability of the average family to live in its own home will be eliminated.

## He's Not for Real, Senator—



## Have We Taken the Wrong Approach to Alcoholism?

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL, Assemblyman, 46th District

Alcoholism is the modern term for drunkenness. In January, 1951, shortly after I took my first oath of office as a member of the Assembly, I voted in committee and again on the floor of the Assembly for a bill which we all believed would go a long way toward reducing what we then called chronic drunkenness. The bill became a law but it certainly did not reduce alcoholic intoxication in California.

Year after year, the Legislature has passed and Governors have signed bills intended to reduce alcoholism by one means or another. I am convinced that all of us, regardless of our good intentions, have taken the wrong approach. Also, I am now convinced that alcoholism has the nature of a disease, that alcoholics are sick people, sick in their minds and physically sick in their bodies.

Several Judges of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County and many Municipal Court Judges have recently written to me, telling me that when they have alcoholics before them, even though the defendants are temporarily sober, they impose jail or prison sentences only as a last resort.

Alcohol is only temporarily stimulating. Actually alcohol is a depressant. This is one of the most common reasons for people committing suicide after several days of heavy drinking. For example, San Francisco has the highest rate of suicides per population of any city in America, and also it has the highest consumption of alcohol per capita. The two go together.

In Los Angeles, one judge, holding court in what is technically designated as Department 58, hears, on an average, the cases of 180 persons daily, all charged with public intoxication. These are people who are grossly drunk in public, men and women who stagger into the street in front

of oncoming traffic and otherwise endanger their own lives and the lives of others.

After their records have been carefully screened, many of them are sent to the Los Angeles County Department of Charities for placement in a long-term residential facility.

Operating under the provision of a law for which I voted a few years ago, the California State Department of Public Health attempts to rehabilitate those offenders who are not almost hopeless and in this activity the State has the cooperation of Sheriff Peter J. Pitchess, Chief of Police William Parker, the Salvation Army, the Los Angeles County Welfare Department, and the County Health Department.

In addition, many religious denominations take part in the same program, contributing their own money and the time of their people, all in a never-ending effort to rebuild the bodies and minds of those who have become literally addicted to alcohol in one form or another.

Some alcoholics are sent to the honor farm operated by Sheriff Pitchess and his deputies. This honor farm was started by the former Los Angeles County Sheriff, Eugene Biscailuz.

In several cities of Los Angeles County, some defendants are sent to meetings conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous. However, it must be emphasized that everyone who has had any extensive experience with alcoholics is now convinced that alcoholism is an illness which debilitates, degrades, maims, and even kills. Legally and technically drunkenness in public is still a crime but our judges are doing their best, consistent with their oaths of office, to treat it as a disease.

## Morning Report:

Of all the ways to protest the Viet Nam war — march-in, sit-in, lie-in, teach-in — I'd say the least effective was chosen by those 350 persons who refused to pay in their income taxes.

The only thing that made April 15 bearable was the knowledge that the taxpayer had plenty of company in his misery. Now, no matter what he felt about Viet Nam before, my guess is that now he is all-out for it — as his own protest against the non-taxpayers.

And as for annoying the government, the 350 picked the wrong agency. Nobody can annoy an outfit, like the Internal Revenue Service, that can sloop up \$90 billion without firing a shot. Or even showing a pistol.

Abe Mellinkoff

## HERB CAEN SAYS:

# Hospital Patients Must Entertain Their Guests

A hospital patient is expected, among other things, to entertain those friends who drop in to visit him.

That's correct, you have to entertain them. They want to be regaled with hilarious stories about your ailment and your treatment. Either that, or they interrupt with "You think THAT'S something? Let me tell you what happened to ME in the hospital. Here I had this 105 fever and—" After a while they begin to look restive so you put a gold star on their report cards and excuse them. If you have a friend in the hospital, leave him alone unless he's a close relative; relatives you're entitled to bug. Then, the flowers, Florists will hate me for this, but too many flowers are a drag. They make an already small room smaller yet, consume oxygen (get off my nose) and make you feel like you're guest-starring at your own wake. You wake up in the middle of the night with all those lilies around your bed and you wonder how long you've been dead. The real buddy is the guy who smuggles you some fried chicken or a hamburger or a mess of ribs. At best, hospital food is not gourmet fare.

collectively, singly and maybe even singularly; they're overworked, underpaid, and have nice legs, a fact that can't be concealed even by the funny stockings and ripple-sole shoes they have to wear, poor dears. One nurse and I discovered we had a strong common bond: we're both in love with Patrick McGoochan, star of "Secret Agent" and "Danger

## San Francisco

Man," so she'd arrange to give me a back ru' while those programs were on the telly.

And so, thanks to these fine, selfless creatures, I was eventually thrown back into the outside world, more alive than dead. "So long," said one of the nurses. "You've been a good patient," and you can't get higher praise than that. As soon as I get my strength back, I think I'll return for a few days.

Catty San Franciscans who attended the Les Crane-Tina Louise wedding in Beverly Hills report it was one of the more memorable examples of the matrimonial art. First catnip: "Les had on more pancake makeup than she did. No 26, I think." When there was a long wait before the appearance of the bride, a joker in the front row arose to announce: "Sorry, folks, ABC just canceled the wedding."

But as the week rolls along, you begin to adjust. The doctors are all splendid and learned, the interns eager and helpful. Then you fall in love with the nurses.

## ROYCE BRIER

# Shadowed Professor Gets Break in Passport Bind

Since the war, the State Department has been under periodic charge of illiberal policy in the issuance of passports.

Most of these attacks have been borderline cases involving supposed Communists or collateral sinners, and most have turned on administration of the Passport Division of Miss Frances G. Knight, a veteran executive long controversial in State.

It has been clear for years that haphazard methods have prevailed in issuance of passports to citizens with unorthodox views. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, on complaints, often tracks down "suspects" and of course the CIA may put an ear in. But Miss Knight is also subject to report by the State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Recently Secretary Rusk revised the procedure, bypassing Miss Knight's office, and centralizing decisions on passport validity.

The trigger for this order was the case of Professor H. Stuart Hughes, history, Harvard, a grandson of the late Chief Justice Hughes.

Prof. Hughes applied for a passport for a sabbatical

## World Affairs

in Europe. Apparently a complaint reached the FBI, which transmitted a report questioning Hughes' status. The phrase "past convictions toward communism" appeared in either the FBI report, or a transmittal by Miss Knight's office.

This transmittal was made to American embassies abroad to keep a sort of

The fateful words, "I now pronounce you man and wife," were greeted by a standing ovation. And as the crowd dispersed, yet another feline Franciscan was heard from: "It oughta be a happy marriage. The only thing they'll ever fight over is who gets to the mirror first in the morning."

Artist-author Barnaby Conrad is about to paint Winemogul Louis Benoit's portrait — in the jet-settiest manner possible. That is, the Conrads have left for So. Calif., there to be picked up by Benoit's personal jet, which will fly them to Puerto Vallarta, one of the many places at which the Benois maintain a home. There, they board their host's 110-foot yacht, La Voyageur, for a leisurely cruise to Acapulco, during which Baraby will presumably work on the portrait. So things shouldn't get too boring, the jet will be available there to whisk the party to Mexico City for a round of gaiety. If all this makes YOU feel tacky, think what it does for me. (Maybe they'll get lousy weather . . .)

Footnote: Every time I hear LBJ make one of his speeches on Viet Nam — "We will honor our commitment to our freedom-loving ally, defying aggression while remaining willing to negotiate at any time" — I expect to hear at the end: "This is a recording."

watch on Hughes. It went out under Miss Knight's name, but she did not sign it.

This paper, so casual with a citizen's name, was a mistake. Prof. Hughes ran against Senator Ted Kennedy in the 1962 election, but the Senator protested his treatment to Mr. Rusk. He said Hughes is "a man of integrity . . . neither a Communist nor a pro-Communist . . . I would not like to see our embassy personnel engaged in shadowing United States citizens."

Mr. Rusk saw Mr. Kennedy had a point, and conferred with Attorney General Katzenbach. This resulted in a statement by Mr. Rusk that "we . . . should not be transmitting abroad unvaluated information."

He thereupon transferred the power to transmit from the passport office to State Intelligence. These transmissions will be made on judgments in collaboration with a "responsible" officer of the Justice Department.

Though the cases are not analogous, another history professor was a State decision. He is Staughton Lynd, Yale, Lynd, a Quaker, visited North Viet Nam last year, and his passport was canceled in January. He applied to a Federal Court for relief, but before decisive action, State renewed his passport for a visit to London and Oslo for private peace meetings.

Given some breaks, you can sometimes beat city hall, in defiance of our cynical saying.

## Quote

America's great and priceless heritage of a free press has not only been a privilege, it has been an absolute necessity to the growth and development of democracy. The local community newspapers have nourished the grassroots of this Republic. They have provided a town meeting where there was no official town meeting. They have been a sounding board for the local opinions and aspirations of our citizens throughout the nation. — Sen. Everett M. Dirksen, Illinois.

## WILLIAM HOGAN

# Lust for Gold Brought Columbus to New World

The general book trade is showing more than usual interest in at least one title due this spring from the scholarly University of California Press. This is "The Early Spanish Main," by the veteran Berkeley campus geographer and historian Carl O. Sauer. Harlan Kessel, sales manager of the UC Press, was telling us about it the other day.

This is a controversial (possibly red-hot) study of what happened in the wake of Columbus' voyages to the New World, 1492 to 1519. It is a work that may cause the rewriting of textbooks in American elementary and high schools. For it shows what an inept, fumbling, basically bad man Christopher Columbus really was. In this sense, the work may be even more controversial than the "Vinland Map" which Yale University introduced some months ago as new and concrete evidence that Norsemen had been in North America long before Columbus.

Kessel explained that Dr. Sauer's book is the sort of thing that may upset the

traditionalists, including the biographer of Columbus, Samuel Eliot Morison. But it is a piece of scholarly and most readable detective work, based on the almost encyclopedic knowledge of Latin American terrain, living habits of natives, flora, fauna, and other esoteric data of this renowned historian and Latin American specialist.

## Books

"The Early Spanish Main" shows that Columbus' obsession for gold established subsequent Spanish colonial attitudes. It traces the fateful period that saw slavery introduced into sugar fields and mines, and the bloody policy toward the Indians, social consequences of which are felt even today in Latin America.

Dr. Sauer shows that the Columbus legend has been romanticized and, in many cases falsified. His years of research reconstructs the true, startling, fantastic historical adventure of that period. The book is due

early in June, and US Press just may have a best-seller on its hands.

Also due in June on this largest (and best, according to its sales manager) list in the history of UC Press, is a silver anniversary edition of "Many Mexicos" Leslie Byrd Simpson's classic work on that country. This is a title which, over the years, so many readers have felt tells them for the first time what they want to know about Mexico — its violent past, art, religion, geography, climate, races, conflicts of cultures. It is less a guide book, of which there are so many, than it is a cultural history, and it tends to clear up many North American misconceptions about Mexico.

For the new edition, Dr. Simpson incorporated new material and has made revisions in his 1941 text. UC Press, which has kept "Many Mexicos" in paperback for some time, will present this in a particularly handsome format (at \$7.50). It couldn't happen to a nicer book.

## THAT EXTRA DIMENSION!

